

Empowering the Citizens: The Potential of Zimbabwean Library and Information Science Schools in Contributing towards Socio-Economic Transformation

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Abstract : Library and Information Science Schools play significant roles in socio-economic transformation but in most cases they are downplayed or overshadowed by other institutions, and professions. Currently Zimbabwe boasts of high literacy rate in Africa and this success would have been impossible without the contributions of library schools and related institutions. Libraries and librarians are at the epicentre of socio-economic development and their role cannot be downplayed. It is out of this context that the writer will explore the extent to which library schools are contributing towards socio-economic transformation, for example, human capital development and facilitating access to information. The writer will seek to explain and clarify how LIS schools are engaged in socio-economic transformation through supporting education and culture through community engagement. The paper will examine the LIS education models, for example, general education and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) or Competency Based Education and Training (CBET). It will also seek to find out how LIS Schools are contributing to the information/knowledge economy through education, training and research. The writer will also seek to find out how LIS Education is responding to socio-economic and political dynamics in Zimbabwe amidst forces of globalisation and cultural identities. Furthermore, the writer will explore the extent to which LIS education can help to reposition Zimbabwe in the global knowledge economy. The author will examine how LIS schools integrate culture and technology.

Keywords : development, information/knowledge economy, culture, empowerment, collaboration, globalisation

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